



NORWALK RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION, INC.

New Canaan, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Wilton, CT; Lewisboro, NY

BUREAU OF WATER PROTECTION AND LAND REUSE  
OFFICE OF THE BUREAU CHIEF



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FEB 04 2010

February 2, 2010

Paul E. Stacey  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse  
Planning & Standards Division  
79 Elm Street  
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

RE: Proposed Stream Flow Standards and Regulations

Dear Mr. Stacey,

The Norwalk River Watershed Association is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization whose members reside in the six Connecticut towns of the Norwalk River's watershed and beyond. Our members support NRWA's many efforts to protect the quality of this region's watercourses, wetlands and drinking water, as well as the quality of life in the region, as outlined in our mission statement. They entrust the NRWA Board of Directors with due diligence on matters that affect environmental quality.

We applaud the intent of the proposed regulations to set protective standards for flow in rivers, but have concern regarding how the regulations propose to balance the need for aquatic life support and public water supply. While we acknowledge the need for balanced use of our water resources, we strongly encourage that the proposed regulations be revised to include provisions that protect fish and aquatic life in all natural watercourses. The proposed Class 4 category is particularly worrisome, as it would greatly diminish the chance of a watercourse that is currently in need of restoration to be restored to its current designated use. Several rivers in the state have segments which are impaired because the current water quality standards are either lacking or there is a failure of their enforcement. Nonetheless, the multiple benefits of these watercourses are vital to our communities and should not be threatened with reduced aquatic life protections in the future because of present-day limited success in protecting them. Furthermore, we strongly encourage a public participation process in which the DEP include the community and pertinent stakeholders in the process of re-classification of the state's rivers, particularly when a river is proposed to be stripped of its protections for fish and aquatic life.

We thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Sara N. da Silva  
President, NRWA Board of Directors